

but she affords relief by many amusing side-lights into human peculiarities, such as man's delight in secret ritual and dressing-up, etc. (pp. 69 and 170). Her sense of humour—although subtle and somewhat sardonic—peeps out on many occasions and enables the saddened reader to indulge in a sly smile—for instance: "New houses were often little better than the old, the jerry-builder doing as he pleased and his pleasure being profit," or "... a slowly dawning realization that harsh workhouse conditions could not make the sick well, the infirm agile or the workless employed."

Her Epilogue is quite admirable: "The story has yet no ending. Strife and endeavour lie before as well as behind. Stupendous sources of power are about to be released. . . . *Laissez-faire*, so newly achieved, is already an outworn dogma. . . . A new way of life has emerged, different from the past in its nature, its values, its pleasures. We know more, we can do more. May the story of our past help us to do it better." So ends a great book. We can but congratulate Dr. Gregg on a very fine piece of work, and echo her pious hope.

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Hollingshead, August B. *Elmtown's Youth—The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents*. New York, 1949. John Wiley. Pp. 480. Price \$5.00.

IN *Elmtown's Youth* Professor Hollingshead seeks to study the reaction of the adolescent to social class differences existing in the community in which he is maturing. The book divides into four sections: first, a discussion of the research problem, followed by an explanation of field procedures, the community setting, and, finally, detailed studies of specific areas of adolescent behaviour within the community framework. Advised by the Chicago Committee on Human Development a "typical Middle Western community" was selected as a centre for the inquiry, which took place between June 1941 and December 1942; (it would have been helpful if the criteria of selection which led

to Elmtown being judged as "typical" could have been described). After summarizing the relevant existing work in this field, the writer discusses the steps leading to the formulation of the central hypothesis, namely that "the social behaviour of adolescents appears to be related functionally to the position their families occupy in the social structure of the community." This is justified, it is suggested, because adolescent behaviour defined as "social action patterns of young people" depends more upon the position the individual occupies in the social structure than upon the physical and psychological changes associated with this age. Though the remainder of the book presents supporting evidence the reader is nevertheless aware that a study of the relationships between the impact of social class differences within the community and the bio-psychological changes of adolescence is necessary to support this assertion. However, no "emphasis is placed on psychological and physical phenomena" as "we are dealing with adolescent behaviour rather than adolescence."

Field procedures are discussed somewhat briefly, clarity being sometimes sacrificed as a result. There were three sources of data; a selected group of adolescents, their parents, and persons outside the family group. Statistical information was derived from questionnaires completed on 549 families and 752 adolescents. In addition Dr. Hollingshead and his wife were successfully absorbed into the Elmtown community, thus allowing them to play observer roles with a minimum of suspicion and antagonism on the part of those observed. This produced two effects. First, the families of the selected adolescents could be rated on an "evaluated participation" scale, giving five grades distinguished according to social class criteria. Secondly, the writer secured an insight into the structure of the community through discussing "the way things work around here" with a wide variety of Elmtowners. This material is presented in discussing the community setting, the most stimulating section of the book. Having showed that "Elmtowners deny the existence of classes but act as if classes exist," Dr. Hollingshead examines the

cultural background of the five social classes. Each is examined in relation to such criteria as prestige, fertility, economic status, religion, leisure time and recreational activities, and particular reference is made to influential individuals in the "upper" classes showing how their influence is carried into effect. A similar descriptive technique is employed in examining the common factor in the background of the majority of Elmtown adolescents, namely, the school, which through its Board of Education is subjected to those class tensions which operate in the community as a whole.

In the final and major section adolescent behaviour within the environment is discussed in terms of seven sections; the school, the job, the church, recreation, cliques, dates and sex. A descriptive technique is still applied, and within each section the main trends outlined in discussing the community setting are further developed. The material could be greatly compressed. The sections are not equally informative. That on "Sex and Marriage" is based on general information collected from 61 adolescent subjects belonging to social classes 4 and 5, intensive sex histories being secured for only 17. The most useful comparison in this section which would be between "upper" and "lower" classes cannot therefore be made.

Elmtown's Youth, as the introduction remarks, is intended for the intelligent general reader rather than the specialist. It fulfils this intention, though the form is discursive.

The existence of social class differences is demonstrated, though the varied contributions of objective and subjective factors are not clearly separated. The positive relationship between the social attitude of the adolescent and his family is established. It would be interesting to examine the extent to which possession of certain skills (athletic prowess, intellectual ability) result in the crossing of class barriers. Equally, the age at which the adolescent becomes vitally conscious of class differences is of first importance, and this might be related to his awareness that the existing social framework is either a barrier or a means of social advance.

The specialist will wish that Dr. Hollingshead had examined some of these problems. He might have devoted greater space to the justification of his arguments and restricted the use of illustrative descriptions. It is to be hoped that the material collected and the experience obtained will be used in further detailed inquiries into this vital sociological problem.

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